

CONCORD PIKE MILESTONE

West side of U.S. Route 202, .7 mile north of Rockland Road
Wilmington Vicinity
New Castle County
Delaware

HAER No. DE-42

HAER
DEL
2-WILMV
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CONCORD PIKE MILESTONE

HAER No. DE-42

HAER
DEL
2-WILM.N,
8-

Location: West side of US Route 202, .7 mile north of Rockland Road
Wilmington vicinity, New Castle County, Delaware

UTM: 18.453300.44030120
Quad: Wilmington North, Del. - PA., 1:24,000

Date of Construction: ca. 1813

Engineer: unknown
Architect:

Present Owner: State of Delaware
Department of Transportation
Dover, Delaware 19903

Present Use: milestone

Significance: The Concord Pike Milestone is a rare vestige of Wilmington, Delaware's nineteenth century turnpike system. This milestone, with a curved rather than pyramidal top, is a variation on the common design type.

Project Information: This work is being conducted as part of a July 1992 Memorandum of Agreement between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Delaware Historic Preservation Office, Federal Highway Administration, and Delaware Department of Transportation as partial mitigation to planned road improvements to DE Route 141 in the vicinity of US Route 202 and the milestone.

The Concord Pike Milestone is historically associated with the Wilmington & Great Valley Turnpike Company. Incorporated in 1811, the Wilmington & Great Valley Turnpike Company proposed to build and operate a turnpike (Concord Turnpike) extending from Wilmington, Delaware through West Chester, Pennsylvania with connections to turnpikes located in the "Great Valley" of Pennsylvania. The route began on the east side of Brandywine Creek, near the city of Wilmington, proceeded east to the intersection of Philadelphia Road with old Concord Road, and continued north along the line of old Concord Road into Pennsylvania. Four turnpikes, the Concord Turnpike, the Wilmington & Kennett Turnpike, Lancaster Turnpike, and the Wilmington & Philadelphia Turnpike, emanated from Wilmington at about this date. The need for Concord Turnpike, as set forth in the preamble to the Act of Assembly, stressed the poor state of the current roadway (old Concord Road) and its "damaging effects to local agriculture and manufacturing" by hindering the transport of goods.

Commissioners charged with superintending the turnpike's construction included Joseph Tatnall, William Tally, Albanus C. Logan, Samuel Canby, Samuel Love, and William Young. Road specifications stipulated that the road not exceed one hundred feet in width. These specifications further stipulated that at least twenty feet be "made an artificial road." The artificial road's composition included a foundation constructed of boards embedded in the soil, stone, clay, gravel or other "proper" material and well compacted to a sufficient depth. The Company faced the road surface with clay, gravel, or stone, and pounded it firm. By 1813 Joseph Tatnall, the company's president, announced the completion of approximately two and one-half miles of turnpike. In 1818 the remainder of the road was licensed through the recommendations of James Brinkley, Caleb Kirk, and John Hiron.

Section 17 of the Act to Incorporate the Wilmington & Great Valley Turnpike Company addressed the need for proper signage along the turnpike. This included the placement of posts indicating road names at the intersections of all public roads. Additionally, Section 17 of the act called for the placement of milestones along the side of the road to designate the distances to and from principal places. There are no specifications designating placement, materials, or design for milestones associated with the Concord Pike. Surviving examples of milestones from other turnpikes, however, often take the form of obelisks, making the Concord Pike Milestone somewhat atypical.

This milestone is located on the west side of Concord Pike approximately 350 feet north of the intersection of Rockland Road and Concord Pike. The Concord Pike Milestone is hewn from granite and measures approximately 2 feet wide by 3 feet tall with a half-round top. Three sides of the milestone are dressed. The milestone includes the chiseled inscription "2 To W" indicating two miles to Wilmington. Its current (1996) location is approximately two miles from the east side of Brandywine Creek, the origin point of the turnpike. By 1813 two and one-half miles of the turnpike had been completed. If started at Wilmington, the turnpike would have reached beyond Rockland Road by this date. It is not clear when the Wilmington & Great Valley Turnpike Company erected this milestone, but it likely does not date from prior to 1813. It appears that the milestone was originally located on the east side of the road. Plans for Route No. 9 (currently Route 202) dated July 22, 1919 clearly show a milestone located along the east side of the road in the vicinity of the Thomas Welden property. These proposed plans called for the replacement of two narrow and irregular roadways with a single twenty-foot wide road. The Delaware Department of Transportation conducted further improvements to the roadway in 1952. At this date proposed plans called for the creation of a divided highway consisting of two, approximately thirty-foot wide, travel lanes. These plans also show the milestone located on the east side of the road at the approximate location of the 1919 road plans; however, the 1952 plans called for the

milestone to be reset in its approximate current location, on the west side of the road. Since the milestone indicates mileage to Wilmington, resetting it on the southbound side of the divided highway appeared more appropriate. Current roadway plans call for the widening of Route 202 and will necessitate the relocation of the milestone.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary and unpublished sources:

- Delaware State Highway Department. "Plan for Construction of Route No. 9, Contract No. 19," July 22, 1919. On file at Delaware Department of Transportation, Dover, Delaware.
- . "Plan for Construction of Contract No. 799, Concord Pike to Murphy Road," June 5, 1952. On file at Delaware Department of Transportation, Dover, Delaware.
- Kise Franks & Straw. "Milestone Concord Pike Delaware," National Register Eligibility Study, November 1990. On file at the Delaware Department of Transportation, Dover, Delaware.
- "Road Map of Brandywine Hundred, Christiana, and part of Mill Creek Hundreds." After 1848. File Number 50.1A. On file at the Delaware Historical Society, Wilmington, Delaware.
- Wilmington & Great Valley Turnpike Co. Papers. Delaware Historical Society, Wilmington, Delaware.

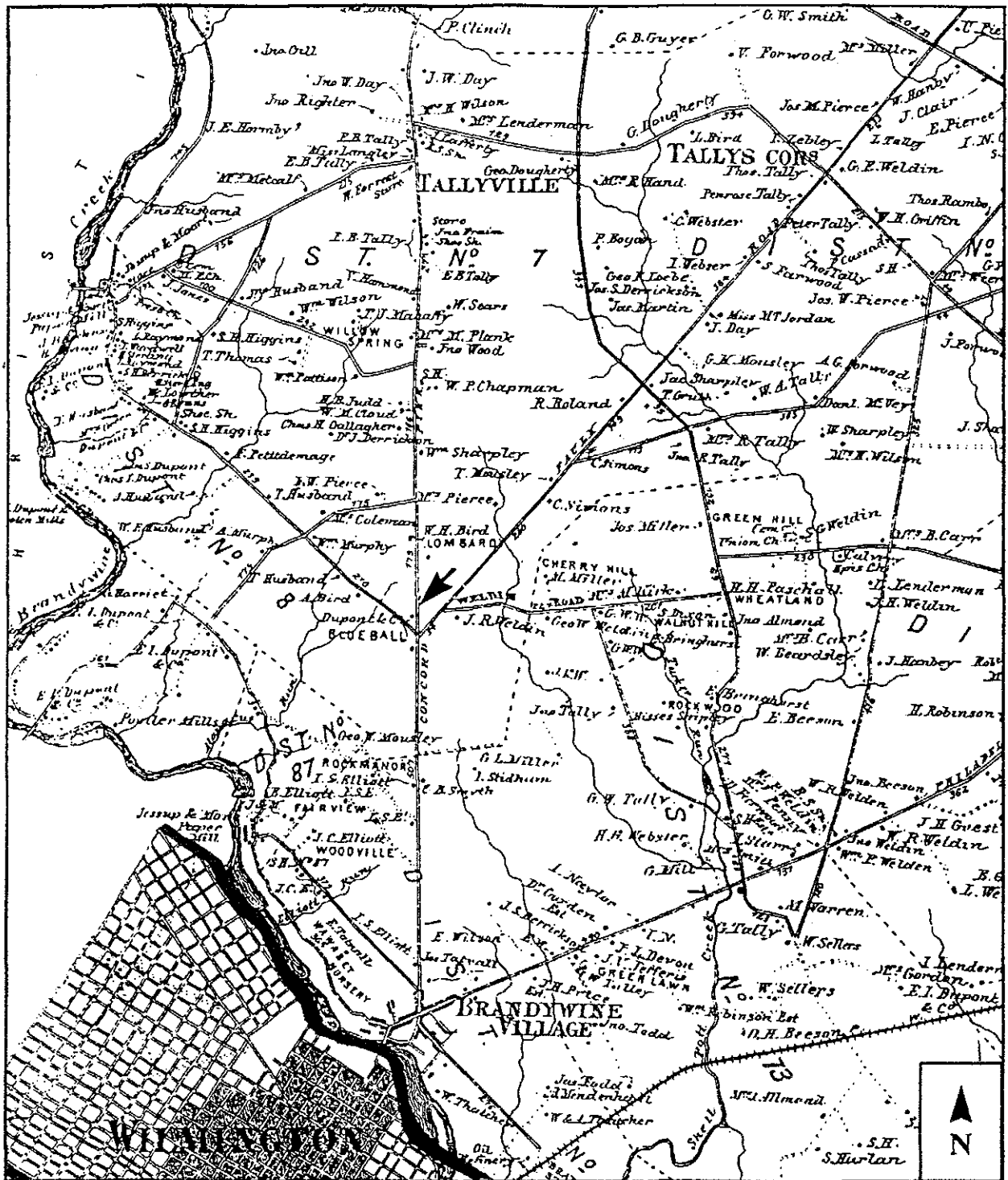
Secondary and published sources:

- Durrenberger, Joseph Austin. "Turnpikes: A Study of the Toll Road Movement in the Middle Atlantic States and Maryland." Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1931
- Gardner, William M. and Joan M. Walker. *A Small History of the Forgotten and the Never Known*. DelDOT Archeological Series No. 84. Dover, DE: Delaware Department of Transportation, 1990.
- Jackson, Donald, C. "Roads Most Traveled: Turnpikes in Southeastern Pennsylvania in the Early Republic." In *Early American Technology: Making and Doing Things from the Colonial Era to 1850*, edited by Judith McGaw. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.
- Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Delaware: 1609-1888*. 2 Vols. Phila.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1888.

CONCORD PIKE MILESTONE

HAER No. DE-42

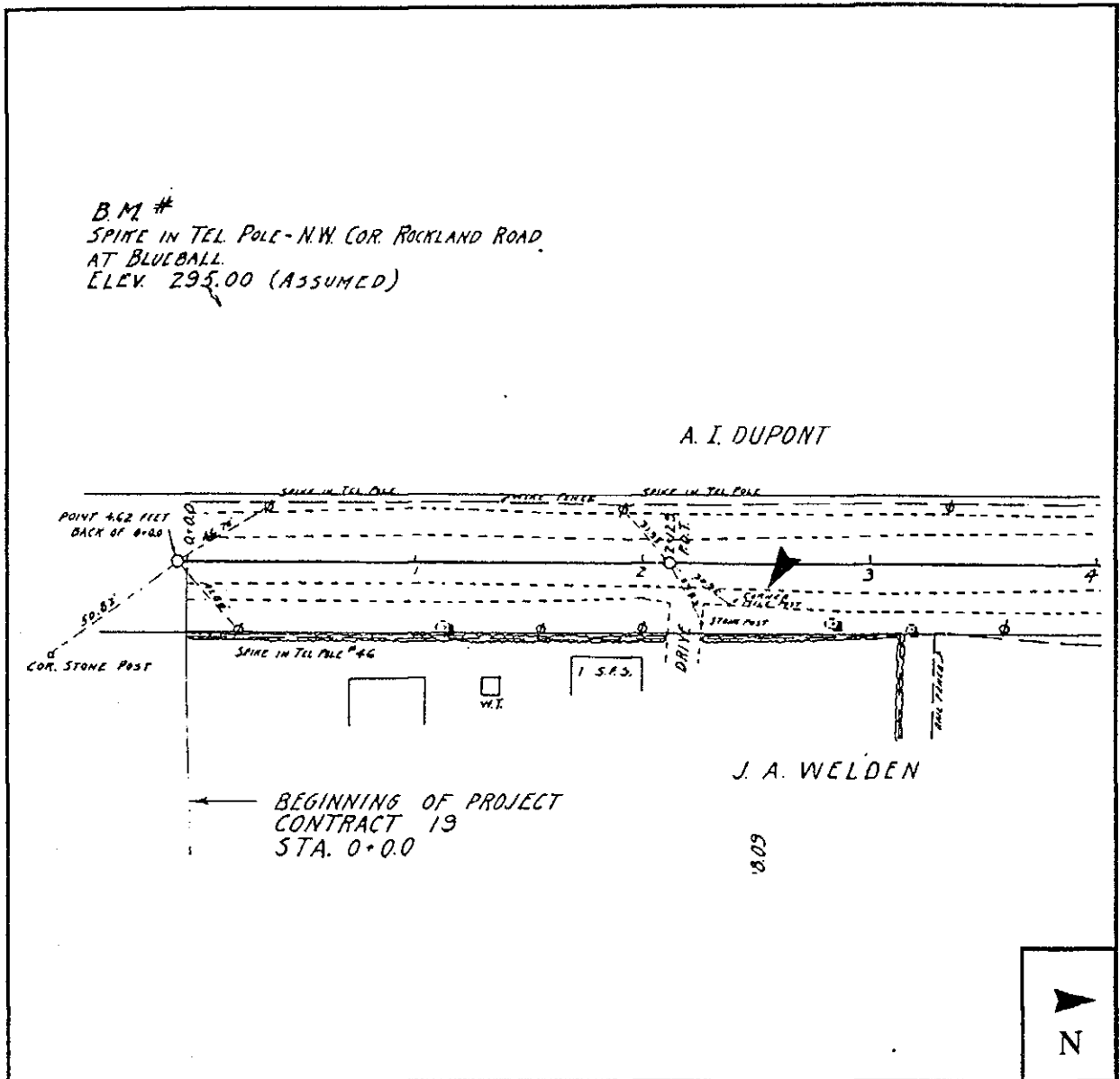
(Page 4)



Concord Pike and vicinity, ca. 1868.

Scale: 1 inch = 3520

Source: D. G. Beers. *Atlas of Delaware* (Phila.: Pomeroy & Beers, 1868).



Concord Pike near Rockland and Foulk Roads, 1919.

Scale: 1 inch = approx. 760 feet

Source: Delaware State Highway Department. "Plan for Construction of Route No. 9 Contract No. 19," July 1919.

On file at Delaware Department of Transportation, Dover, Delaware.